

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANAA 00257 100807Z

11

ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 IO-03 AID-10 SWF-01 L-02 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 NSC-10 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00

OMB-01 AGR-03 EB-03 SPC-01 COME-00 TRSE-00 DRC-01

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O R 100717Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3295

AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

INFO USUN 061

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 0257

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, YE, UNDP, WFP, AORG

SUBJ: US WHEAT DONATION TO WFP FOR YAR

REF: (1) STATE 026592

(2) USUN 438

(3) SANAA 244

1. YARG CENTRAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION DIRECTOR DR. ABDUL-KARIM AL-IRYANI INFORMED US FEBRUARY 9 THAT PRESIDZNT IRYANI HAD DECIDED AS FOLLOWS ON YARG ACTION WITH REGARD US WHEAT DONATION TO WFP FOR YAR. PRESIDENT HAD INDICATED THAT YARG HAD TO SHOULDER THE MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY TO PREVENT ABUSE; IT SHOULD NOT ASK USG DO THIS. (A) INITIAL DOCKSIDE OBSERVATION WOULD BE BY REPRESENTATIVES OF CONFEDERATION OF YEMEN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATIONS (CYDA) DESIGNATED BY ITS PRESIDENT, DEPTY CIC COL. IBRAHIM AL-HAMD. SOME MILITARY OVSE-VERS MIGHT ALSO BE PRESENT BUT UNOBTRUSIVELY. (PRESIDENT
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 SANAA 00257 100807Z

FELT THAT IF DISTRIBUTION TURNED OUT TO BE WITHOUT

ABUSE, VISIBLE USE OF TROOPS FROM OUTSET WOULD BE SEEN AS AN AFFRONT TO UNDP/WFP, GOVERNOR OF HODEIDA AND OTHERS.) IF INITIAL OBSERVATION SHOWED ATTEMPTED DEVIATIONS FROM OFFICIAL PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION, ARMY WOULD OPENLY MOVE IN AND ESCORT FOOD TO FINAL DESTINATIONS. (B) SINCE CYDA NAMED AS YEMEN COUNTERPART ORGANIZATION IN AGREEMENT WITH WFP, IT REDUNDANT CREATE SPECIAL CABINET COMMITTEE PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OTHER PRECAUTIONS BEING TAKEN. (C) OBSERVATION BY US MISSION WELCOME.

2. DR. IRYANI SAID THAT AT PRESIDENT'S INSTRUCTION HE WOULD BE PROVIDING FULL BRIEFING TO DEPUTY CIC FEBRUARY 9.

3. DR. IRYANI GRATIFIED THAT US TAKING STEPS WITH WFP TO ENCOURAGE PRESENCE FOR SHIP ARRIVAL (NOW SCHEDULED FEBRUARY 20 ON BOARD SS GEORGE WALTON REPLACING SS MOBILIAN) OF NEW WEST GERMAN DIRECTOR AND LANGDON SMITH.

4. WE HAVE SOUGHT KEEP REPORTING ON THIS SUBJECT TO ESSENTIALS, BUT PARAS 3 AND 4 OF REF 2 PROMPT SUBMISSION OF SOME ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND. IN AMBASSADOR'S FEBRUARY 7 CONVERSATION WITH HIM, DR. IRYANI COMMENTED AT SOME LENGTH ON VARIOUS ATTITUDES WITHIN YARG TOWARD WFP DIRECTOR TAHIR. IMPLYING THAT THESE OFFICIALS MIGHT BE ASSOGIATED WITH TAHIR'S QUESTIONABLE ACTIVITIES, IRYANI SAID MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE AND HEALTH ARE STRONG TAHIR BOOSTERS. THEIR MINISTRIES HAD CONSISTENTLY PRESSED CPO TO REQUEST A FIFTH YEAR EXTENSION OF TAHIR'S YEMEN ASSIGNMENT. TAHIR ALSO HAS SUPPORT OF SOME POWERFUL TRIBAL SHAIKHS. CPO, DOUBTFUL ABOUT TAHIR, HAD RESISTED, ARGUING THAT UN PRACTICE IS NOT TO LEAVE AN OFFICER IN PLACE MORE THAN 4 YEARS AND YARG SHOULD NOT ASK UN MAKE AN EXCEPTION TO ESTABLISHED POLICY. UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM TAHIR'S INFLUENTIAL FRIENDS IN OTHER MINISTRIES, HOWEVER, CPO HAD FINALLY AND RELUCTANTLY CONCURRED IN REQUESTING HIS EXTENSION UNTIL JUNE 1974 TO ENABLE ONE CHILD WHO HAS COMPLEX MEDICAL AND PSYCHIATRIC PROBLEMS TO COMPLETE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR. THIS, SAID IRYANI, DID NOT INDICATE JUDGMENT ON PART OF

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SANAA 00257 100807Z

CPO VINDICATING TAHIR. IT WAS LIMITED TACTICAL RETREAT AIMED AT TNWARTING PRESSURES FOR LONGER EXTENSION.

5. RE PARA 4 USUN REFTTEL, IN BRIEFING EMBASSY ON RESULT OF HIS INVESTIGATION INTO WFP IRREGULARITIES, LAST OCTOBER, SMITH TOLD US THAT HE HAD TRIED GET HIS FINDINGS ON

TAHIR ACROSS TO KOUWENHOVEN BUT LATTER NOT RECEPTIVE.

SMITH SAID CONFIDENTIALLY HIS CONCLUSION WAS
THAT KOUWENHOVEN DISINTERESTED IN PURSUING INFORMATION
AGAINST A SUBORDINATE THAT WOULD REFLECT ON HIS OWN
PERFORMANCE AND HAD WORKED TO THWART INVESTIGATION.
IT WAS SMITH'S STATEMENT THEN THAT LED EMBASSY SUGGEST
FODAG OBTAIN VIEW FROM HIGHER LEVELS IN WFP (SANAA 1935).
CRAWFORD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WHEAT, CORRUPTION, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE PERSONNEL, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS, DONATIONS (BALANCE OF PAYMENTS), FOREIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SANAA00257
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SANAA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740243/aaaabohc.tel
Line Count: 122
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: (1) STATE 026592
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <02 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US WHEAT DONATION TO WFP FOR YAR
TAGS: EAID, AORG, YE, UNDP
To: STATE ROME
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005